



United States Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service

# Motorized Recreation Project Draft Environmental Assessment

Bass Lake and High Sierra Ranger Districts, Sierra National Forest  
Fresno, Madera, and Mariposa Counties, California

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\*Cover Photo: Volunteer 4WD vehicle with trailer traveling on designated route to work site on the High Sierra Ranger District on the Sierra National Forest. Photo taken by Sierra National Forest employee Kevin Woods, 2018.

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# 1.0 Introduction

**The Sierra National Forest (SNF or Forest) is proposing to add approximately 29 miles of trails and 12 areas (11 acres) to the National Forest Trail System (NFTS) and publish on the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM). These proposed trails (routes) and areas are currently being utilized on the ground, but are not designated as part of the NFTS; therefore, they do not qualify for funding and reconstruction, and do not meet the Forest Service (FS) standards for sustainability and user conflict mitigation. These actions are proposed to be implemented on the Bass Lake (BLRD) and High Sierra Ranger Districts (HSRD) of the SNF.**

The SNF has committed to the motorized recreation community to examine routes and areas that were not previously analyzed and decided in the 2010 Travel Management Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or the 2012 Travel Management 2 Environmental Assessment (EA) for potential addition to the NFTS. After two public meetings and numerous comments received, the Motorized Recreation Project (Project) incorporates roads, motorized trails, and areas that meet the following criteria into the development of the alternatives:

1. Recreation opportunities are enhanced by creating loop options and/or connect to motorized trails, roads, and areas/destinations.
2. Route is unique (parallel trail/road that does not go to the same location or overlap with trail/road that already exists).
3. Records/data already exist for the route or area (previously identified in the Forest Service database).
4. Route was not previously closed due to known resource concerns (e.g., critical habitat, meadow) and other NEPA decisions.
5. Areas are large enough in size to be used for motor vehicle riding within perimeter and/or for parking/staging vehicles to go ride outside the perimeter in areas where roads are legal for green-sticker use.
6. Areas and routes located in highly used Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) geographic areas are priority.
7. User conflict is addressed.

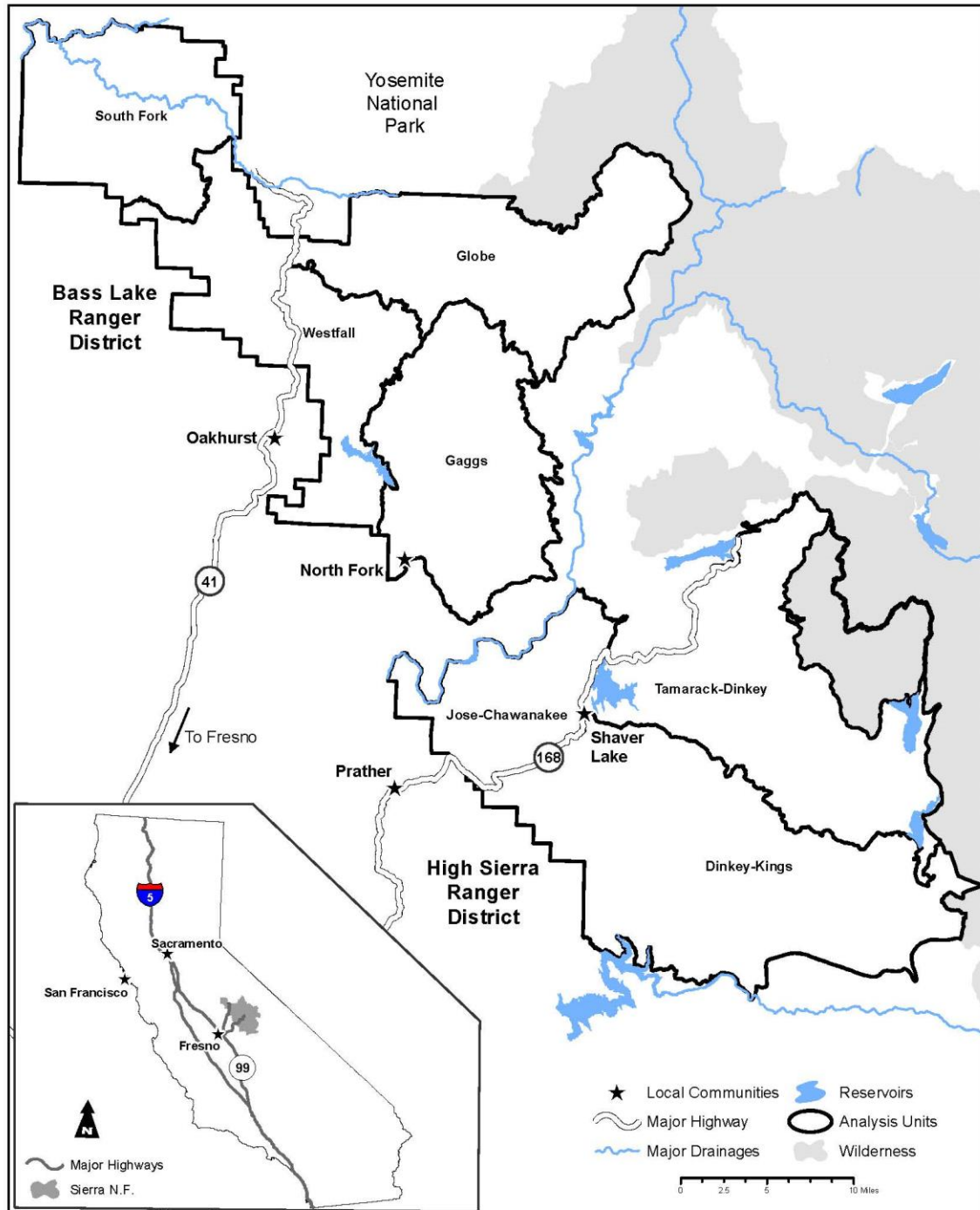
The Forest has prepared this EA to determine whether the addition of the proposed routes and areas to the NFTS may significantly affect the quality of the human environment and thereby require the preparation of an environmental impact statement. By preparing this EA, the Forest is fulfilling agency policy and direction to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For more details of the proposed actions, see Section 2.0 Existing Conditions and Alternatives of this document.

## 1.1 Proposed Project Location

The Project area is located within the confines of the Sierra National Forest, bound by the Kings River to the south, Merced River and Yosemite National Park to the north, west of the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness Areas, and is outside of designated Wilderness areas.

Figure 1. Vicinity map

## Motorized Recreation Project - Sierra National Forest





## 1.2 Need for the Proposal

Forest Service (FS) policy is to provide a diversity of road and trail opportunities for experiencing a variety of environments and modes of travel consistent with the FS recreation role and land capability (FSM 2353.03(2)). **The purpose of the Project** is to enhance the experience for motorized recreationalists on the Forest.

This Project addresses several needs that have been identified by the SNF.

**There is a need** to correct the connectivity lost between current and proposed trails/routes and the NFTS to provide a linked system that accesses a larger, more diverse riding opportunity.

**There is a need** to provide enhanced quality of motorized recreation experience (e.g. loops). Making sure that motorized recreation vehicles can move throughout the system in a legal and useful way with connectivity to other recreation opportunities is critical to the SNF transportation system.

**There is a need** to provide motor vehicle access to dispersed recreation opportunities (camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, etc.). Dispersed recreation activities on the SNF depend on motorized access for parking or staging and these are typically accessed by short roads (spurs), some of which are currently unauthorized routes. The current regulations make continued use of such short spurs and areas illegal and preclude motorized access by the public to many dispersed recreation opportunities.

**There is a need** to change the vehicle class on some roads to allow for motorized mixed-use to access connectivity between dispersed recreation opportunities (especially camping) and the motorized trail system. Some dispersed recreation opportunities are accessed by NFS roads open to highway-legal vehicles only (HV). Those who recreate using non-highway legal vehicles (typically ATVs and motorcycles) are unable to legally ride on HV roads.

**There is a need** to change the type class to make continued use of short spurs legal and allow for public access to dispersed recreation areas. Many dispersed recreation opportunities are accessed by these short roads, currently classified as reconstruction level (ML) 1 (closed to all vehicle traffic), 2, or 3 roads.

## 1.3 Public Involvement and Tribal Consultation

The following are public involvement activities that have occurred for this Project proposal:

- A news release was sent to local news media and Forest partners on May 11, 2018 announcing two public meetings to gather public input in the development of the proposed action.
  - The following public meetings were hosted (pre-scoping) on the SNF:
    - May 24, 2018 at Bass Lake Ranger District in North Fork, CA.
    - June 4, 2018 at High Sierra Ranger District in Prather, CA.
- The proposal was first listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions in the April-June 2019 edition and has been in each subsequent edition.
- A scoping letter was mailed to known interested parties on May 17, 2019 announcing a public scoping period that commenced on May 17, 2019 and ended June 17, 2019.
- A public meeting (scoping) was held at the Sierra National Forest Supervisor's Office in Clovis, CA on June 11, 2019.
- A mountain bike and motorcycle users' group meeting was held at the Bass Lake Ranger District on June 18, 2019. Comments from this collaborative process have been incorporated into Alternative 3.

The Forest Service consulted the following individuals, Federal, State, tribal, and local agencies during the development of this EA:

- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Big Sandy Rancheria of Mono Indians
- Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians
- Dunlap Band of Mono Indians
- North Fork Mono Tribe
- North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians
- Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians
- Table Mountain Rancheria
- American Indian Council of Mariposa County (Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation)
- Mariposa County
- Fresno County
- Madera County
- Cal Fire
- Valley Air District
- CA Waterboard
- National Park Service
- Oakhurst Chamber of Commerce
- Clovis Chamber of Commerce
- Mariposa Chamber of Commerce
- Diane Feinstein - US Senator's office
- Kamala Harris - US Senator's Office

## 2.0 Existing Conditions and Alternatives

The Alternatives were updated following the scoping period due to more accurate mapping of route lengths, resulting in a reduction in total mileage. Alternative 3 was developed through facilitated collaboration between user groups who were at the scoping meeting on June 11, 2019. Routes removed in Alternative 3 address the resolution of user conflicts.

**Table 1: Alternative Comparison**

	<b>Existing Conditions</b>	<b>Alternative 2</b>	<b>Alternative 3</b>
<b>Total</b> motorized trails open to MT:	7 miles	19 miles	18 miles
<b>Total</b> motorized trails open to AV:	1722 miles	1723 miles	1723 miles
<b>Total</b> motorized trails open to 4WD>50”:	148 miles	158 miles	158 miles
<b>Total</b> motorized trails open to <50”:	35 miles	40 miles	39.5 miles
<b>Total</b> areas open to cross-country travel (CUA):	216 acres	227 acres	227 miles
Motorized trails <b>added</b> open to MT:	--	12 miles	11 miles
Motorized trails <b>added</b> open to AV:	--	1.3 miles	1.3 miles
Motorized trails <b>added</b> open to 4WD>50”:	--	10 miles	10 miles
Motorized trails <b>added</b> open to <50”:	--	5 miles	4.5 miles
Areas <b>added</b> as open to cross-country travel:	--	11 acres	11 acres
ML1 and 2 roads <b>converted</b> to open to 4WD>50”:	--	.4 miles	.4 miles
ML3 roads <b>converted</b> to open to AV:	--	1.3 miles	1.3 miles

**MT:** open to dirt bikes, trails are <24” wide.

**AV:** open to all vehicles (motorized mixed-use).

**4WD>50”:** open to 4-wheel drive vehicles over 50” wide.

**<50”:** open to vehicles less than 50” wide.

**Cross-country travel:** Concentrated Use Areas (CUAs).

### 2.1 Existing Conditions

The existing motorized trail conditions on the SNF include trails and areas which are categorized based on the allowed use. This EA refers to “proposed trails” or “routes” to describe routes that are currently not included in the NFTS. Unauthorized routes and areas are also currently being utilized by Forest visitors; however, these routes and areas are not part of the NFTS and are therefore not published on the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM). The MVUM is a free map initially generated from the 2010 Travel Management decision and is available to the public with the purpose of presenting all of the designated (legal) motorized trails, roads, and areas for use on the Forest. The MVUM also defines trail classifications (such as <50”, which refers to a typical ATV) and open season of use for each trail and area (which is dictated by a variety of resource concerns).

A unique area within the Project area is referred to as the 007 routes. These unauthorized routes are located 4.5 miles north of North Fork, CA on the BLRD and are popular with and utilized by both the mountain bike and motorcycle users’ communities. All motorized use of these routes is

currently prohibited. The following routes are included in the 007 area: BP65, BP80, BP81, BP82/6S42G, BP100, and BP101.

See Section 2.0 for current mileage and acreage for NFTS trails and CUAs.

All reference to “Alternative 1 – No Action” within the Project record is equivalent to the existing conditions of this Project.

## 2.2 Alternative 2

The SNF proposes to add approximately 29 miles of trails and 12 areas (11 acres) to the NFTS. Of those 29 miles of proposed trails, 1.3 miles are proposed to change from road to trail and .4 miles are proposed to be converted from road to motorized-mixed use. Portions of the majority of the non-system routes within this Project would require reconstructive actions (refer to Section 2.4.6 for details) to meet the standards in the OHV Trail Maintenance Agreement (TMA, in Project record) in order to support sustainable long-term use prior to being added to the NFTS.

Only a small subset of routes within Alternative 2 will be reconstructed (if needed) and brought into the system each year. The number of trails brought into the system will be driven by the type of work needed and the availability of resources to complete.

All management actions associated with this Project would be compliant with the current guidance set forth in the SNF Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP, 1991) and Amendments (2004, 2012).

**Table 2: Routes Proposed to be added to NFTS in Alternative 2**

<b>Route Identifier</b>	<b>~Length</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Proposed Season of Use Dates</b>	<b>Proposed Vehicle Class</b>
06S010J	0.34	Bass Lake	01/01-12/31	4WD>50
06S047Y	1.26	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	All Vehicles
09S009C	0.10	High Sierra	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
AE-5	0.07	High Sierra	01/01-12/31	4WD>50
BP100	0.68	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
BP101	0.61	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
BP44	0.84	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
BP44a	0.30	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
BP65	0.28	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
BP80	1.30	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
BP81	1.12	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
BP82	1.49	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
JG12	0.80	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	< 50inches
JG-29	0.38	High Sierra	03/01-01/15	4WD>50
JG40	0.25	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	< 50inches
JH-138	0.51	High Sierra	03/01-01/15	4WD>50
JH-14	0.06	High Sierra	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
JH-18a	0.15	High Sierra	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
JH-47	0.06	High Sierra	05/20-12/01	4WD>50
JH-71z	0.90	High Sierra	04/15-12/15	4WD>50

Route Identifier	~Length	District	Proposed Season of Use Dates	Proposed Vehicle Class
JM-17	0.59	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
JM-1y	0.50	Bass Lake	01/01-12/31	MT
JM-20	0.41	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
JM-20y	0.05	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	< 50inches
JM-20ya	0.33	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	MT
JM-6y	0.26	Bass Lake	01/01-12/31	< 50inches
JSM119	0.90	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	<50 inches
JSM55	0.42	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
KB-12	0.15	High Sierra	01/01-12/31	4WD>50
KB-13	0.70	High Sierra	03/01-01/15	4WD>50
KD-07	0.70	High Sierra	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
ML88	0.27	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
PK11z	0.61	Bass Lake	09/01-12/01	< 50inches
PK-15x	0.05	Bass Lake	01/01-12/31	4WD>50
PK-19	0.49	High Sierra	06/15-11/01	4WD>50
PK-72z	0.43	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
PK-84z	0.31	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
PUB-11	1.17	Bass Lake	07/01-11/01	MT
pub2	0.37	Bass Lake	05/01-12/01	4WD>50
pub3	0.63	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
PUB-33	0.19	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	< 50inches
SC1	0.78	Bass Lake	08/15-12/01	< 50inches
SC4	0.83	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	MT
SR-44z	0.94	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	MT
SR-45z	0.39	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	MT
SR-45za	0.28	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	MT
SR-82c	0.15	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	4WD>50
SV23	0.10	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	< 50inches
SV-4	0.42	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	MT
TH-13s	0.49	Bass Lake	09/01-12/01	4WD>50
TH-13u	0.31	Bass Lake	01/01-12/31	< 50inches
TH-14s	0.53	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	< 50inches
TH-18w	0.47	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	< 50inches
TH-197	0.35	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
TH-19s	0.44	Bass Lake	09/01-12/01	4WD>50
TH-19z	0.39	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
TH-31xext	0.03	Bass Lake	08/15-12/01	4WD>50
TH-47z	0.48	Bass Lake	08/15-12/01	4WD>50
TH-7z	0.29	High Sierra	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
TH-92	0.41	Bass Lake	04/15-12/15	4WD>50
TR-21	0.26	Bass Lake	03/01-01/15	4WD>50
<b>Total Miles</b>	<b>29.37</b>			

## 2.3 Alternative 3

Alternative 3 was developed to address user conflicts. Collaborative efforts demonstrated by the mountain bike and motorcycle users' groups ensure that both groups can safely share the proposed trails in the 007 area. BP100 and TH-14s were also removed due to conflicts with stock drives. This alternative is similar to Alternative 2 with the following exceptions:

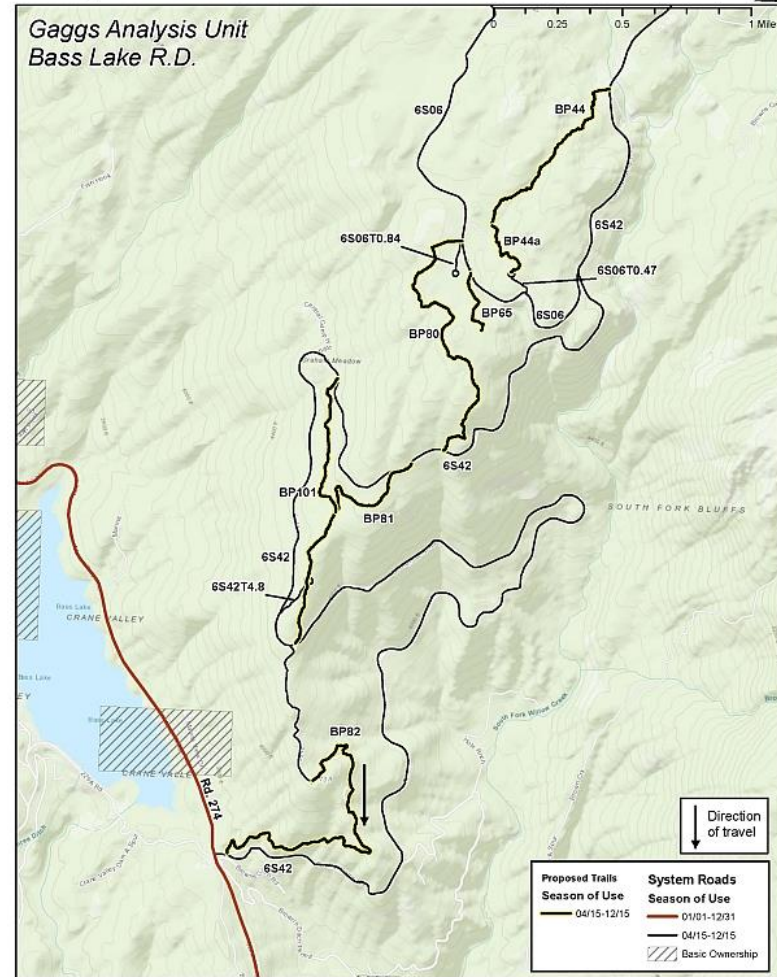
- BP82/6S42G: One-way, downhill traffic only from 6S42G to Brown's Ditch/County Rd. 274 for both mountain bike and motorcycle use.
- BP80: Include only the portion below the intersection with BP100 (reference Figure 2: Alternatives 2 and 3 – 007 Area Comparison Maps for difference).
- BP81: Two-way traffic for both mountain bike and motorcycle use.
- BP100: Removed as possible resolution to user conflict.
- BP101: Two-way traffic for both mountain bike and motorcycle use.
- TH-14s: Removed as possible resolution to user conflict.

Figure 2: Alternatives 2 and 3 - 007 Area Comparison Maps

007 System - Alt 2



007 System - Alt 3







## 2.4 Design Criteria Common to All Action Alternatives (except when specified)

Design criteria (DC) for the Project were developed to minimize potential environmental impacts to resources and mitigate user conflict. Design criteria include, but are not limited to, measures from the applicable SNF LRMP Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs), 2010 Travel Management Environmental Impact Statement, Forest Service (FS) Manuals and Handbooks, FS Best Management Practices (BMPs) and the SNF OHV Motorized TMA. The TMA is an agreement between the District/Forest specialists with the OHV program managers regarding the DC necessary to do yearly reconstruction on designated trails. General DC are located in the TMA in the Project record. The following DC are specific to this Project and are applicable to all alternatives unless specified.

### 2.4.1 Aquatics

**Project Specific Design Criteria –Yosemite toad and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog**  
In addition to the implementation of appropriate S/Gs and BMP protection measures, the following protection measures will apply in suitable Yosemite toad or Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog habitat. For the Yosemite toad, these areas include meadows with a 1,250-meter buffered distance for upland habitats. Protection measures are based on species life history, habitat requirements and dispersal patterns (Liang 2010). These would be applied to any proposed route, roads, or CUA that may become occupied prior to completion of maintenance/restoration. The purpose of these design criteria is to avoid or minimize the potential for adverse effects to the Yosemite toad, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog and associated habitats including critical habitat.

#### **Environmental Training**

**AQ-01** For the Yosemite toad (YT), before any work occurs in the Project area including equipment staging, all Project personnel will participate in an environmental awareness training from the District aquatic biologist regarding special status species and sensitive habitats present in the Project area. If new construction personnel are added to the Project, they must receive the mandatory training before starting work. As part of the training, an environmental awareness handout will be provided to all personnel that describe and illustrates sensitive resources (i.e., special-status wildlife habitat) to be avoided during project implementation and lists applicable permit conditions identified to protect these resources. Training will include a description of the YT and its habitat, the specific measures that are being implemented to conserve the species for the project, and the boundaries of the project area. Brochures, books, and briefings may be used in the training session, provided that a qualified person is on hand to answer any questions.

**AQ-02** Handling procedures for the Yosemite toad or Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog will be coordinated with the District aquatic biologist to follow most current handling guidelines.

#### **General:**

**AQ-03** All trail related Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be followed.

**AQ-04** Trail maintenance standards identified in FSM 2309.18 will be followed.

**AQ-05** Invasive weed control would not include the use of herbicides for this analysis.

**AQ-06** Repairs within Riparian Conservation areas should occur in the fall, or when water levels are low.

**AQ-07** All activities that occur within occupied habitats will be monitored by a qualified

biologist or appropriately trained personnel.

**AQ-08** Where actions overlap occupied habitat or crosses occupied stream habitat, work site and connected habitats will be surveyed for YT or SNYLF occupancy prior to start of work to ensure occupied habitats in the vicinity will remain hydrologically connected during and after work is completed.

**AQ-09** For the YT where routes overlap occupied habitats, implementation of project actions will start 60 days after breeding is completed (Liang et al. 2010), and if hydrologically connected, when breeding habitat has dried, or metamorphosis has been completed (whichever comes first). Occupancy, timing of breeding, and if the habitat has dried would be determined annually by the District aquatic biologist.

- If maintenance work (i.e. clearing of logs across road) needs to occur prior to the annual implementation date, coordination with the District aquatic biologist will occur to develop site specific mitigations that will reduce or eliminate potential for take. Additional consultation with the USFWS will be needed.
- Emergency repair will be coordinated with the District aquatic biologist and the USFWS.
- If alterations to habitat are expected to occur as a result of maintenance, repair will not be completed.

**AQ-10** In known YT occupied habitats, all project activities shall end by October 1 to allow for overwintering migrations and protection of overwintering YT. End timing of Oct. 1 may be adjusted up to October 15 on an annual basis dependent on weather conditions by coordinating with the District aquatic biologist (Martin 2008, Liang 2010).

**AQ-11** Currently there is no occupied SNYLF habitat, however if habitat becomes occupied prior to maintenance, work in occupied SNYLF habitat will occur between June 15 and October 15.

**AQ-12** On a daily basis and prior to working, equipment and work site will be checked for YT or SNYLF individuals that may have moved into the area. Refer to handling procedures coordinated with the district aquatic biologist if individuals are encountered in the work area.

**AQ-13** For protection of potential YT adult microsites, apply the following to open, dry lupine area work sites

- a. Avoid traversing off trail across open, dry lupine covered areas where numerous rodent burrows are observed in order to access trail repair materials.
- b. Minimize trips for gathering materials and consolidate trips to one general area (when possible).
- c. Avoid taking materials from this area including downed logs and rocks.
- d. Do not use open and dry lupine areas as turn-around locations, vehicle storage, or equipment staging sites.

**AQ-14** All operations would cease during and for at least 48 hours after any rainfall to allow for YT dispersal across upland / terrestrial habitats in known occupied habitats.

**AQ-15** Mechanical operations would cease one hour before sunset and not continue until after sunrise to protect dispersing YT in known occupied habitats.

**AQ-16** Discovery of amphibians or reptiles (e.g. frogs, toads, salamanders, and turtles) during project implementation will be reported to the District aquatic biologist immediately (PBO

Appendix C #6). Sighting reports should include at a minimum photos to properly ID the species and a GPS point (NAD 83 CONUS).

### **Fuel Storage and Refueling**

To prevent fuels, lubricants, cleaners, and other harmful materials from discharging into nearby surface waters or infiltrating through soils the following will be incorporated into the Project: (reference National BMP Road-10, R5 BMP 2.11, S/G 92, S/G 99):

**AQ-17** Do not store fuels and other toxic materials in associated riparian conservation areas (RCA) and critical aquatic refuges (CAR) to limit the exposure of the Yosemite toad (YT), Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, and other aquatic species to the toxic materials unless the location is agreed to in advance by the District hydrologist or aquatic biologist. (S&G #99, R5 BMP 2.11, BMP Road-10)

**AQ-18** Refueling of all equipment (including chainsaws) will occur outside SMZ's (R5 BMP 2-12) and at least 100 feet from any riparian area.

**AQ-19** All refueling within YT upland habitat will occur with the use of an absorbent spill pad (LRMP S&G 69, 75, ROD S&G 92, 99, ROD desired conditions, species viability (minimizing impacts)

**AQ-20** Storage of heavy machinery will occur outside of known occupied YT habitat or critical habitat unless the District aquatic biologist has reviewed and analyzed the proposed locations (such as existing landings, existing roads, or turnout areas) (National BMP Road-10 (R5 BMP 2.11)).

**AQ-21** Any spills (regardless of amount) must be cleaned up immediately.

**AQ-22** Ensure that spill plans are reviewed and up-to-date. (ROD S&G 99, R5 BMP 7.4)

**AQ-23** Implement measures described in National BMP Road-10 (Equipment Refueling and Servicing) (R5 BMP 2.11) to prevent adverse effects from fuels, lubricants, cleaners, and other harmful materials that are discharged into nearby surface waters or infiltrate through soils to contaminate groundwater resources on skin-respiring amphibians resulting from equipment refueling and servicing.

### **Trail tread maintenance/restoration**

**AQ-24** Do not pile or throw cut materials into streams or depressions that may collect water off-trail.

**AQ-25** Do not pile or throw cut materials into meadows unless placing into old trail tread to keep people on the correct trail.

**AQ-26** Any trees that are cut along the trail will be moved away from the trail and put where it will not create a dispersal barrier to animals.

**AQ-27** Do not pile on or up to 20 feet around old stumps in known occupied or designated critical habitat YT habitat (*for protection of YT summer and overwintering terrestrial habitats*).

**AQ-28** Temporary base rock storage locations will not be located in occupied habitat.

### **Water control features maintenance/construction**

**AQ-29** Water bars and drain dips will be cleared in a way that minimizes sediment flow from trail from entering into streams or meadows. Add additional water barring if necessary to mitigate.

**AQ-30** Quarry site storage locations needed within occupied YT or SNYLF habitat will be coordinated with the District aquatic biologist.

**AQ-31** Riparian vegetation will only be cut to provide for trail clearing limits.

**AQ-32** Within 100 feet of known occupied meadows, no more than 10% of materials that are determined non-essential for YT cover components will be collected for trail maintenance materials. This is also for protection of soils / erosion potential.

- a. Any materials needed within occupied Yosemite toad habitat or critical habitat will be coordinated with the district aquatic biologist.

**AQ-33** No removal of rocks for maintenance materials from inside any meadow.

**AQ-34** No removal of logs from inside any meadow unless they are suspended and not currently touching the ground.

**AQ-35** Do not drag any materials across meadow or occupied stream habitat.

**AQ-36** Any trees cut for trail materials will be felled away from meadows or streams. Site will be surveyed for falling location that provides for crew safety and minimizes impacts to occupied habitat.

**AQ-37** Do not use stream bed materials as a minor quarry site, especially flowing channels. Anchoring loosened or loose rock during minor on-site stream bank crossing stability is allowed, but will be kept to a minimum.

**AQ-38** If streams or meadows are adversely affected by any maintenance work to the extent that the listed amphibians and/or their habitats may be negatively affected, mitigation measures and short-term maintenance/restoration actions will be designed and implemented through coordination with the district aquatic biologist during or after project implementation to prevent post declines and/or improve conditions. Long-term maintenance/restoration actions will be evaluated and implemented according to priority (per S&G 102), which includes adverse impacts to listed species.

### **Stream and channel crossing improvements**

**AQ-39** Culvert cleaning associated with streams connected to occupied YT habitats will not occur until after YT metamorphosis has occurred. Exceptions will relate to emergency work which will be coordinated with the District aquatic biologist and FWS.

**AQ-40** Debris or fill removed from culverts will be placed in an approved area that does not comprise of cover components identified in YT occupied or critical habitat. Debris removed (vegetation, rocks or logs) from ditches, from brushing actions, or from culverts will be put in appropriate locations that do not damage YT upland habitat, remove cover components, or create dispersal barriers. Vegetation and tree materials will not be scattered, they will be piled.

### **Barriers**

**AQ-41** Removal of barriers from the proposed routes, roads and areas will be done in a manner that maintains critical habitat cover components.

**AQ-42** Materials collected on site for obstacles will not include boulders or logs that have associated rodent burrows.

**AQ-43** Storage of imported materials will not occur in occupied YT habitat unless location is coordinated with the District aquatic biologist.

## 2.4.2 Botany/Invasive Weeds

**Invasive Weeds:** Specific locations of invasive/noxious weeds can be found in the Botany Report in the Project record.

**BOT-01:** All heavy equipment used for reconstruction or restoration of trails must be clean (free of soil, mud, plant parts, debris) before being brought to a particular trail.

**BOT-02:** A map of invasive weeds discovered during 2019 field surveys will be provided to OHV staff with recommendations for control or avoidance.

**BOT-03:** Educational materials for OHV users regarding the negative effects of invasive / noxious weeds will be made available and posted at high priority areas where weed spread is occurring.

**BOT-04:** Control/eradicate Bull Thistle, Common St. Johnswort, Medusahead, Foxglove, and/or Woolly Mullein on the following trails:

6S42/BP100	TH-19z	SV23	PUB2	JM-6y
BP82/6S42G	PK11z	SV-4	SR-44z	SR-45z
BP65/6S06	THJ-99	TR-21	SR-82c	SR-82c
09S09C	JM-1y	6S47Y	KD-07	JM-20ya
CUA 247				
<b>Trails can be added to MVUM while annual work is being completed.</b>				

**BOT-05:** Control/eradicate invasive/noxious weeds on the following trails prior to adding to MVUM:

TH-18w	ML-18	5S16B	ML-31
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**BOT-06:** Survey recommended on the following trails within 2 years of adding to MVUM. Coordinate with OHV managers to minimize impacts if sensitive plants are found.

BP80	JG12	JSM55	05S046Y
PK-07w	JM20	SC1	

**BOT-07:** Survey recommended on PUB-11 trail prior to adding to MVUM. Coordinate with OHV managers to minimize impacts if sensitive plants are found. Treat any invasive weeds if found.

**BOT-08:** Control Italian thistle and any other invasive/noxious weeds present in CUA 82. If the CUA can be used meanwhile without vehicles spreading invasive weeds from the CUA, the invasive weed control work can occur concurrently with the CUA being in the MVUM. If not, eliminate the invasive weeds prior to bringing into the MVUM.

## 2.4.3 Recreation

*Developed Campgrounds:*

**REC-01:** To avoid noise conflicts with developed campground visitors, trail reconstruction activities utilizing heavy equipment on proposed routes within a ¼ mile of a developed campground would need to occur between 8am and 5pm. This DC is applicable in the following locations:

Route ID	Campground	District	Miles in Buffer
TH-197	Big Sandy CG	Bass Lake	0.11
PK11z	Grey's Mtn CG	Bass Lake	0.50
BP44	Whiskers CG	Bass Lake	0.23
TH-13s	Upper Chiquito CG	Bass Lake	0.20
TH-14s	Clover Mdw CG	Bass Lake	0.14
TH-92	Lower Chiquito CG	Bass Lake	0.20
		Total	1.38

*Dispersed Recreation:*

**REC-02:** During OHV trail reconstruction, the safety of Forest visitors accessing dispersed recreation must be considered prior to work being done and mitigate any concerns via signage, public outreach, traffic cones, web media, or other means adequate for the situation.

*Concentrated Use Areas (CUA):*

**REC-03:** Area boundaries for CUAs will be delineated on the ground by Recreation OHV staff using brown fiberglass carsonite posts or natural materials (i.e. logs and boulders). This will be completed on an as-needed basis and/or annually.

*Proposed Routes:*

**REC-04:** All trails would need to be cleared and maintained following the standards set in the Forest Service Handbook and Manual, as well as the SNF Motorized TMA (Project record).

## 2.4.4 Transportation

**TRAN-01:** Installation of signs on designated trails and motorized mixed-use roads will be done under consultation with Forest Service Engineering Staff and/or Forest Sign Plan.

**TRAN-02:** Grade road surfaces only as necessary to meet the smoothness requirements of the assigned operational maintenance level and to provide adequate surface drainage on motorized mixed-use roads.

## 2.4.5 Visual Resources

**VIS-01:** Install barriers (natural or constructed) where designated motorized trails, areas, and roads intersect unauthorized routes and unauthorized areas to encourage the public to stay on designated motorized trails, areas, and roads.

## 2.4.6 Watershed and Geology

Trail and CUA specific DC include one or more of the following six reconstruction actions, and are referenced by number in the DC columns in Table 3 below:

1. Trail tread maintenance/construction

2. Water control features maintenance/construction
3. Trail re-alignment (within 49 feet of current route, per TMA)
4. Stream/channel crossing improvements
5. Barriers
6. Parking areas, staging areas, and other large surface area improvements

**Table 3: Applicable Watershed and Geology DC by Route**

Route ID	DC	Route ID	DC	Route ID	DC
AE-5	5	JM-20y	1,2	SC4	TBD
BP100	1,2,3,4	JM-20ya	1,2,3,5	SR-44z	1,2,3,4,5
BP101	1,2,4	JM-6y	1,2	SR-45z	1,2,3,4,5
BP44	1,2,3,4,5	JSM119	1,2,3,4,5	SR-45za	1,2,3
BP44a	2,5	JSM55	1,2	SR-82c	1,2
BP80	1,2	KB-12	1,2,4,5	SV23	1,2
BP80	1,2,5	KB-13	1,2	SV-4	1,2,3,4
BP81	1,2,4	KD-07	1,2	TH-13s	1,2
BP82	1,2,4	ML88	1,2	TH-13u	1,2
JG12	1,2,3,4,5	PK11z	None	TH-14s	1,2,4
JG-29	1,2	PK-15x	None	TH-18w	1,2,3,4
JG40	1,2	PK-19	1,2	TH-197	1,2,4
JH-138	1,2,4	PK-72z	1,2,3,4	TH-19s	1,2,3,4,5
JH-14	1,2	PK-84z	1,2,4	TH-19z	1,2
JH-18a	1,2	PUB-11	1,2,4	TH-31xext	1,2,4
JH-47	1,2	pub2	4	TH-47z	1,2,3,4,5
JH-71z	1,2,3,4	pub3	1,2,4	TH-7z	1,2
JM-17	1,2,3,4,5	PUB-33	5	TH-92	1,2,4,5
JM-1y	1,2,3,4,5	SC1	1,2,3,4	TR-21	1,2,3,4
JM-20	None				

**Table 4: Applicable Watershed and Geology DC by CUA**

CUA ID	DC	CUA ID	DC
CUA 82	6	CUA 180	6
CUA 88	1,5,6	CUA 183	6
CUA 101	1,5,6	CUA 247	1,5,6
CUA 136	6	CUA 331	6
CUA 142	6	CUA 359	6
CUA 162	1,5,6	CUA 360	5,6

## 2.4.7 Wildlife

### Terrestrial Wildlife General Design Criteria

If ground disturbing activities need to occur within ¼ mile of known nest sites or den sites, check with biologist for status of nesting birds or denning mammals.

### Project Specific DC for Fisher

In addition to implementing the Trail Maintenance Agreement (SNF) and S/G 87, the following protection measures will apply in occupied and suitable Pacific Fisher habitat. These areas include where known den sites are within ¼ mile of the proposed routes or CUAs.

**WL-01:** Maintenance to routes, roads or CUAs will not occur during March 1 – May 15 if fisher are denning in the area. Consult with district biologist to determine if denning is occurring. The district biologist will work with PSW to determine if animals are denning. The denning information is derived from the fisher studies that occur on the District. If the denning information is not available then we will assume the habitat is occupied.

**WL-02** If elevated (above ambient) disturbance of extended time (e.g. >2 hours per 0.25 mile segment) and/or louder than a chainsaw in occupied potential denning habitat or potential denning habitat of unknown occupancy, during the denning season cannot be avoided:

1. Do not generate noise at night.
2. Limit disturbance producing activities (above ambient levels) to after May 1.
3. Minimize the duration of noise generating activities. Work within 0.5 mile segment of project must be completed within three days.

### **Other Specie Specific DC**

The DC listed below will help minimize the impact to the species as listed in the SNFPA 2004. These criteria are based on the action area of ¼ mile around the proposed routes or CUAs that intersect with habitat for the species.

**WL-03:** *Noise disturbance to territorial or nesting goshawks.* Seasonal closure from Feb 15-Sept 15. Consult with district biologist to determine if nesting is occurring or surveys need to be conducted. There may be a delay in reconstruction actions if species are nesting near the proposed route.

**WL-04:** *Noise disturbance to territorial or nesting California spotted owl.* Consult with district biologist to determine if nesting is occurring or surveys need to be conducted. There may be a delay in reconstruction actions if species are nesting near the proposed route.

**WL-05:** *Noise disturbance to territorial or nesting Great Gray owls.* Consult with district biologist to determine if nesting is occurring or surveys need to be conducted. There may be a delay in reconstruction actions if species are nesting near the proposed route.

**WL-06:** *Noise disturbance to deer in holding areas.* Seasonal closures for deer holding areas above 5,000 feet elevation: May 15 - June 15 and October 1 - November 30. Seasonal closures for deer holding areas below 5,000 feet elevation: May 1 - June 1 and October 15 - November 30.

**WL-07:** *Noise disturbance to deer in winter ranges.* Vehicle travel at low levels in deer winter ranges from December 1 - April 30.

## **2.5 Design Criteria Applicable to Alternative 2 Only**

**RANGE-01:** Designated trails that bisect the Central Camp or South Jackass Allotments (BP100 and TH-14s) would need coordination with the Bass Lake District Range Manager during cattle drives typically occurring in June and September to avoid Forest user conflicts.



## 2.6 Design Criteria Applicable to Alternative 3 Only

***REC-05:*** Signage either by bulletin board, single post or carsonite for directional travel will be installed on all trails that are applicable. This would be completed prior to trail becoming published in MVUM.

## 3.0 Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives

This section summarizes the potential impacts of the actions in the Alternatives for each impacted resource. Resources that would not be impacted and therefore not further analyzed include: fire and fuels, vegetation and silviculture, and wilderness. No issues regarding these resources were brought forward from internal specialists or the public during the scoping period.

### 3.1 Air Quality

The effects of the alternatives are analyzed to determine the potential for public motor vehicle travel to cause or contribute to violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards, for degradation of air quality, affect Class I areas or to cause or contribute to visibility impairment beyond the existing conditions. Air quality impacts would be considered significant if they are expected to cause or contribute to an air quality violation in a non-attainment or maintenance area. However, if total direct and indirect project emissions fall below designated applicability threshold levels established under the Conformity Rule, no adverse change in attainment status is expected.

Releases of PM<sub>10</sub>/PM<sub>2.5</sub> (fine and ultra-fine particulate matter) into the environment occur from motor vehicle travel on NFTS roads and trails and from some associated prescriptive actions. Tailpipe emissions from motorized equipment will produce criteria pollutants such as CO, as well as the precursor gases for O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

#### Effects Common to All Alternatives

##### Direct and Indirect Effects

The number of vehicle miles traveled annually by forest users is not expected to change in any of the alternatives because the number of proposed trails to be added to the system compared to the current number of trails and roads is minimal. No new visits per year are projected under each of the action alternatives the proposed routes are currently being used, although not an authorized use. Thus, it will not affect the number of vehicle miles traveled annually within the Project area.

Criteria pollutant emissions from recreational vehicle use (which includes both engine exhaust and fugitive dust) are expected to stay the same for both alternatives because of the small difference in mileage between the two alternatives.

The use of heavy equipment and worker vehicles will produce exhaust emissions, while travel on unpaved roads will produce fugitive dust. Insignificant increases in short-term, localized emissions will occur under both alternatives during these activities.

Because the criteria pollutant emissions are projected to remain the same as existing conditions under both alternatives there will be no increase in emissions due to the Project. Therefore, the Project is below the de minimis levels and is exempt from the requirement to perform a conformity determination.

##### Cumulative Effects

The Project is expected to have limited cumulative impacts to air quality. Road and trail reconstruction will create small localized, temporary increases in fugitive dust and emissions from motorized equipment. Overall, Alternatives 2 and 3 will not impact air quality since the implementation of either alternative will not change the amount of vehicle miles traveled. Emissions associated with this Project are extremely small in the global atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> context,

making it impossible to measure the incremental cumulative impact on global climate from emission associated with this project. The potential for cumulative effects is considered negligible for both alternatives because neither would result in measurable direct and indirect effects on air quality or global climatic patterns.

## 3.2 Aquatics

### Effects Common to All Alternatives

The aquatic species Biological Assessment (BA) (Barnes, Sorini 2020) presents an analysis of effects for the Project on federally listed threatened (T), endangered (E), proposed (P), and candidate (C) species (TEPC) and their habitat and is conducted to determine whether formal consultation or conference is required with the United States Department of Interior (USDI) Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. The aquatic species Biological Evaluation (BE) documents FS programs or activities in sufficient detail to determine how an action or proposed action may affect any TEPC, or FS sensitive species (FFS) and their habitats (FSM 2670.5) to determine whether a proposed action or any of the alternatives will result in a trend toward the sensitive species becoming federally listed.

There are a total of six aquatic FSS species on the SNF, two of which have habitat within the Project area and were analyzed in detail in the BE: Western pond turtle and Foothill yellow-legged frog. The other four species (Kings River slender salamander, Kern brook lamprey, hardhead minnow, and limestone salamander) do not occur in or have habitat within or adjacent to the Project and would not be affected directly, indirectly, or cumulatively by the Project. Detailed analysis on the Western pond turtle and Foothill yellow-legged frog determined that the Project has the potential to affect a small percentage of suitable habitat for these species (less than 0.1% of the habitat in the analysis area). None of the proposed routes are within known occupied habitat for Foothill yellow-legged frog. Two of the proposed routes are within known occupied Western pond turtle habitat. There may be direct and indirect effects to Western pond turtle individuals and suitable habitat along these routes; however, short term effects of adding the proposed routes to the NFTS could have a beneficial effect on habitat since these proposed routes would be brought up to Forest road standards and maintained which would reduce sediment entry into stream habitat, stabilize stream crossings, and improve habitat condition. Cumulative effects from this Project would be negligible given that less than 0.1% of the suitable habitat analyzed would be affected. With the application of Project DC, it was determined that Alternatives 2 and 3 may affect individual Western pond turtle or Foothill yellow-legged frog, but are not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of viability for these species.

The aquatic species BA (Barnes, Sorini 2020) considered effects on 2 Federal listed aquatic species and their habitats, and one critical habitat that occur within the action area: Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, *Rana sierrae* (SNYLF) (endangered), the Yosemite toad (*Anaxyrus* [= *Bufo*] *canorus*) (YT) (threatened), and Yosemite toad designated critical habitat. The potential for direct effects of collisions (crushing or injuring) of adding these proposed routes, CUAs, or roads to the Forest trail system from vehicles traveling on ones within YT and SNYLF habitat is not expected to occur. Maintenance/restoration actions to bring routes, roads or CUAs to Forest Standards will follow Forest Standard and Guidelines, Best Management practices, and Project specific design criteria to minimize or eliminate the potential for direct or indirect effects. Proposed routes, roads, and CUAs are spread out across the Forest, therefore local impacts will be short term, and a beneficial effect to the YT and SNYLF should occur by bringing these up to standard. Beneficial effects for the YT and SNYLF include localized improvement to habitats by reducing sedimentation from these trails, stabilizing stream crossings, and limiting use to these trails.

The detailed analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on the three species and one critical are evaluated under the BA. It was determined that the project May Affect, but is Not Likely to Adversely Affect the Yosemite toad, Yosemite toad critical habitat, and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. There are thirteen TEPC species and one critical habitat that either did not occur, did not have habitat within or adjacent to, or were not affected directly, indirectly, or cumulatively by the Project actions. These species were not addressed in detail in the BA, nor was formal consultation required with the USDI USFWS for these species. The Project would have no effect on these thirteen aquatic species or their habitats or critical habitat:

- Blunt-nosed leopard lizard (E), *Gambelia* (=Crotaphytus) sila
- California red-legged frog (T), *Rana aurora draytonii*
- California tiger salamander (T), *Ambystoma californiense*
- Conservancy fairy shrimp (E), *Branchinecta conservation*
- Delta smelt (T), *Hypomesus transpacificus*
- Giant garter snake (T), *Thamnophis gigas*
- Lahontan cutthroat trout (T), *Oncorhynchus* (=Salm(o) clarki henshawi
- Mountain yellow-legged frog (E) *Rana muscosa*
- Owens tui chubb (E), *Gila bicolor snyderi*
- Paiute cutthroat trout (T), *Oncorhynchus* (=Salmo) clarki seleniris
- Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog Critical habitat
- Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp (T), *Branchinecta lynchi*
- Vernal Pool tadpole Shrimp (E), *Lepidurus packardi*

### 3.3 Botany

#### Threatened and Endangered Plants

The Biological Assessment (see Project record) concluded that the Project will not affect federally listed plant species because the proposed trails and areas are not located in suitable habitat, and consultation with US Fish and Wildlife Service is therefore not necessary.

#### Forest Service Sensitive Plants

Because Project DC for Alternatives 2 and 3 provide for protection and long-term sustainability of FS sensitive plants, implementation of either action alternative for the Project is not expected to negatively directly or indirectly affect any of the species analyzed (see Biological Evaluation in Project record for details). For the FS sensitive plants analyzed, the Biological Evaluation determination is that either Alternative 2 or 3 may affect individuals but is not likely to lead to a trend toward federal listing or a loss of viability. This is predicated upon the general Project DC in addition to the route or CUA specific DC being followed. The potential for a few plants to be affected exists and is assumed, especially for the numerous routes and CUAs with rocky/gravelly habitat that has yet to be surveyed. Twenty-three FS sensitive plant species were eliminated from analysis because they are not present in the Project area.

#### Invasive/Noxious Non-native Plants (Invasive Weeds)

Because general and route/CUA-specific Project DC for weed prevention and treatment are built into both action alternatives, the overall risk of invasive weed introduction and spread as a result of the Project has been reduced from high to low.

### 3.4 Cultural Resources

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800 – Protection of Historic Properties, the SNF has compiled an inventory of cultural resources within the Project area and assessed the potential for adverse effects to these resources. Included in this inventory effort is consultation with American Indian tribes that have unique traditional and continuing connections to the SNF (see Tribal Consultation in Section 1.3) as well as an archaeological survey and evaluation of the eligibility of multiple resources for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This overall Section 106 compliance effort meets the requirements of the 2018 Programmatic Agreement (PA) Among the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region (Region 5) California State Historic Preservation Officer, Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Processes for Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for Management of Historic Properties by the National Forests of the Pacific Southwest Region (Regional PA).

A summary Section 106 report will be completed with the full cultural resource inventory and an analysis of the effects of the Project on these resources. This report will be submitted to the California State Historic Preservation Officer for concurrence and the information will be updated in the Final EA for this Project. Because the report contains information on the nature and location of archaeological and cultural resources, it will be kept administratively confidential.

#### **Effects Common to All Alternatives**

No adverse effects to cultural resources are anticipated from implementation of the Project; however, no routes will be approved if it is determined through Section 106 analysis and consultation that an adverse effect is likely to occur. Design criteria derived from the Regional PA will be applied to cultural resources as DC (in Section 2.4 and in the TMA in Project record). The DC will be specified on a site-specific basis in the Section 106 report. All NRHP-eligible and potentially eligible properties will be managed for no adverse effect from Project activities.

### 3.5 Management Indicator Species

#### **Effects Common to All Alternatives**

The Forest Service Management Indicator Species (MIS) list (2007) for the SNF is a representation of habitat and species associated with those habitats. There are 11 habitat types that are discussed in the MIS Report. Of those 11, nine habitat types, along with the associated management indicator species, are within the Project area and are discussed in the report. The analysis for these nine habitats determined that implementation of Alternative 2 or 3 would have negligible effect on the MIS habitats analyzed, and would not alter the existing trend in habitat type over time because there is no change in canopy closure, use (although currently illegal), or presence of medium-sized snags, and the percentage of overall MIS habitat type impacted by the Project is small. The MIS report is in the Project record.

### 3.6 Range

The Project area is located within multiple active grazing allotments on the SNF. In Alternative 2, two allotments in particular have proposed routes (BP100 and TH-14s) that are a concern with the current permitted grazing use in the Central Camp and South Jackass Allotments. These two routes are not in Alternative 3, and therefore the user conflicts are alleviated.

## 3.7 Recreation

Project implementation of Alternative 2 or 3 will aid in the sustainability of the included routes and areas and further provide recreational opportunities within the Project area for future use. The basis for determining expectations of future conditions of recreation areas relies on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS). All of the proposed routes and CUAs within the Project area are classified under Roaded Natural or Rural ROS. Indicators will be identified by the following impacts: 1) Recreation access, experience and safety, and 2) ROS compatibility.

### **Alternative 2**

#### **Direct and Indirect Effects**

Recreation access will improve in this alternative; however, multiple user conflicts will not be completely resolved. The proposed routes and CUAs would be available for use by motorized means, in addition to those roads, trails, and areas currently designated on the MVUM. There are positive long term direct and indirect effects to the overall recreation experience with the increase in access. The recreation experience will improve through the availability of legal OHV use once routes are reconstructed and maintained. There will be continued impacts to the recreation experience for non-motorized trail users due to unresolved user conflicts with motorized trail users on the 007 routes. Without the user groups resolving their conflicting trail use needs, all of the 007 routes will continue to have occurrences of conflicts between user groups (OHV versus bicycle use) and safety concerns with unmitigated directional travel. BP100 and TH-14s should have improved user experiences over time with a reduction in conflicts between trail users and stock use. The completion of the route reconstruction actions will help aid in the safety of users.

There are no direct and indirect effects to ROS compatibility for Roaded Natural or Rural classifications.

#### **Cumulative Effects**

Overall, there are positive cumulative impacts to the recreation experience with the improved access to additional proposed trails and CUAs. Additionally, with route reconstruction actions and an increase in OHV recreation opportunities, a reduction of user conflict is expected, although not fully mitigated.

There is, however, still the potential for long term cumulative effects, including the degradation of the recreation experience and safety for the anticipated users due to conflict between the non-motorized and motorized community on the 007 routes. This continued conflict in use could result in a loss of recreation experience for one or both groups completely due to safety concerns.

There are no cumulative effects to ROS compatibility for Roaded Natural and Rural ROS classifications.

### **Alternative 3**

#### **Direct and Indirect Effects**

The effects of this alternative would differ from Alternative 2 in that it allows for more emphasis on trail user management and function, therefore improving the recreation experience for all users. Improvements in function will especially be noticeable along BP82 with directional travel designations. This alternative also places more emphasis on safety by addressing the user conflict issues.

Recreation access will be improved in this alternative; although not as much as Alternative 2 with the slight reduction in mileage. There are direct effects to recreation access. Access to the 007 routes through multiple connection options will allow for the loop experience that motorized and non-motorized trail users look for in a challenging uphill-downhill setting. The closed loop that BP80 provides will make up the loop opportunity lost with the removal of BP100 from this alternative. Additionally, BP82 will be designated as downhill only, remedying the user conflict between mountain bike and motor bike users. The critical piece to this alternative is that the makeup of the 007 routes proposed came directly from a collaborative process between the local mountain bike group and OHV group.

The recreation experience will continue and should see no change directly related to this Project through the availability of access to various activities nearby, including camping, hiking, OHV use, etc. There are long term direct and indirect effects to the overall recreation experience when the routes are reconstructed and brought into the system, with the mitigations to the user conflict issues, enhancing the recreation experience. Based on this assessment, user conflict is expected to be lessened in comparison to Alternative 2, resulting in an enhanced and safer recreation experience for multiple user groups.

There are no direct and indirect effects to ROS compatibility for Roaded Natural or Rural classifications.

### Cumulative Effects

Overall, there are positive cumulative impacts to the recreation experience with the improved safety between user groups from a collaborative approach to management and access to additional OHV trail and CUA opportunities. Due to improvements to on-the-ground conditions with DC specifying reconstruction, maintenance, and an increase in OHV recreation management, a reduction of user conflict is expected. There are no cumulative effects to the Roaded Natural and Rural ROS compatibility as there are no direct or indirect effects.

## 3.8 Social, Cultural, and Economics

The Social, Cultural, and Economics report from the 2010 Travel Management FEIS is still valid for this Project as the environments of communities that may be affected by the SNF Project's decision remains the same. After reviewing the demographic and economic data from that report, the direct and indirect effects remain the same for both Alternative 2 and 3 in this Project compared to the previous 2010 decision and that effects analysis is incorporated by reference. Those effects as they relate to the Project are:

- This Project would designate one more motorized mixed-use road resulting in a slight increased ability to disperse motorized use (e.g. connecting the proposed motorized trails).
- Should motorized recreation use continue to increase as projected, motorized recreationists may seek other areas to recreate on the SNF.
- The Forest Service would be responsible for maintaining the newly designated trails and areas and providing a safer motorized trail system. Maintenance of the newly designated additions to the motorized trail system would be taken into account in the appropriated budget and would qualify for green sticker grant funds. These alternatives would comply with the Travel Management Rule.

Specific to this Project, there are no proposed actions in either alternative that would adversely affect the diversity of visitors to the SNF; however, Alternative 3 would positively affect all Forest users more than Alternative 2. Alternative 3 better addresses the user conflict between non-motorized users (e.g. range permit holders and mountain bikers) and motorized users, allowing use by all. Motorized recreation is a small percentage (between 1 and 3 percent) of the overall visitation to the SNF; therefore, these alternatives are not expected to result in quantifiable changes to the SNF region economies as measured by visitor expenditures, employment and labor income.

## 3.9 Transportation

### Alternative 2

#### Direct and Indirect Effects

ML1 and ML2 road systems are relatively low traffic volume and have received less maintenance in recent years. The current road system contains many roads where vegetation has been growing into the roadway. From recent tree mortality and winter storm events, these roads may be inaccessible due to downed trees, washouts and other damages. By implementing Alternative 2, road 06S010J and 09S009C would be converted to motorized trail, maintained and funded by trails.

**Table 5: Roads Being Reviewed for the Alternatives:**

Road ID	Length	Proposed Use	Maintenance Level	Engineering Recommendation
069010J	.34	MT	ML1	Proceed with conversion of road to trail.
09S09C	.10	MT	ML2	Proceed with conversion of road to trail.
06S047Y	1.26	AV	ML3	Motorized Mixed-Use Report. Details in report in Project record.

To convert 06S047Y to mixed-use, a Motorized Mixed-Use Report has been completed, as required, to analyze the conversion of an ML3 road being utilized by highway legal vehicles to include non-highway legal vehicles. This road has the potential to be used safely by passenger vehicles and non-highway legal vehicle (OHV). The improvements necessary to allow the mixed-use can be accomplished by incorporating the proposed DC. The proposed mixed-use area is popular for OHV users because it will provide connectivity and access to several miles of trails. The conclusion of the analysis (see Motorized Mixed-Use Report) is to recommend the approval of the mixed-use section of 06S047Y. The improvements to the road are minimum with a relative low cost. This modification will not affect the frequency of maintenance, but will improve the interaction between OHV and passenger cars.

Implementing any of the proposed actions in Alternative 2 would be beneficial by decreasing the road miles in the roads transportation system, therefore reducing the required maintenance costs from the limited roads budget.

### Alternative 3

#### Direct and Indirect Effects

In Alternative 3, actions would remain the same. Effects and processes would remain the same as they are described in Alternative 2.



## 3.10 Visual Resources

Roads, trails, and non-system routes can create landscape alterations as measured in form, line, color and texture. Uncharacteristic linear alterations can be reduced through good design, which also provides long term visual benefits. Unmitigated, they present uncharacteristic qualities in forest landscapes. The presence and use of unauthorized routes and unauthorized areas can adversely affect visual resources and gradually revegetate over time.

**Table 6: Comparison of Alternatives**

Indicator	Existing Conditions	Alt 2	Alt 3
Number of key view sheds that are or have the potential to be affected by motor vehicle travel	22  Key view sheds may potentially be negatively affected due to the continued use of unauthorized routes and areas.	0  Key view sheds; no negative effects on visual resources from all key view sheds	0  Key view sheds; no negative effects on visual resources from all key view sheds

See Table 2 of the complete Visual Resources report in the Project record for definition and description of the 22 key view sheds.

### Effects Common to All Alternatives

When actions in Alternatives 2 and 3 are added to the other past, present and reasonably foreseeable activities on the SNF (as described in the Visual Resources report in the Project record), there are no cumulative effects on visual resources from key view sheds because these alternatives have no negative effects on visual resources and therefore cannot contribute to adverse cumulative effects.

## 3.11 Watershed & Geology

This assessment included looking at proposed OHV trails and CUAs with the below conditions:

- Located within the riparian management areas (RMAs) of higher order streams and meadows
- Contained an extensive number of stream crossings on perennial and intermittent streams
- Located on geologic units with the potential to contain naturally occurring asbestos (none observed through field verification)
- Located on unstable lands (no issues observed through field verification)
- Proximity to abandoned mine land features (no issues/hazards observed through field verification).

Reconstruction/maintenance actions for all alternatives will bring a proposed OHV trail or CUA to standard for sustainable long-term use without generating soil loss that exceeds restorability, and without causing erosion or sedimentation which significantly affects resource values beyond the facilities. Reconstruction actions include one or a combination of the following; trail tread reconstruction/maintenance, water control feature reconstruction, trail re-alignment, stream/channel crossing reconstruction, barriers, and/or parking areas, staging areas, and other large surface area re-construction/reconstruction. Once a proposed OHV trail or CUA facility has been brought to standard, it should be hydrologically invisible and disconnected from the

hydrologic network. This provides for natural flow to occur downslope and across the trail tread minimizing any concentrated flows that could lead to excess erosion and sedimentation.

With proper design, implementation (re-construction/reconstruction actions), and long-term reconstruction completed by forest staff and volunteer groups, the proposed motorized OHV trails and CUAs in Alternatives 2 and 3 will not have a negative effect on the watershed resource. During the implementation phase of the Project to bring a proposed OHV trail or CUA to standard there will be increased activity and subsequent impacts to the watershed, however this will be short term (less than one year) effect and will lead to a long-term watershed benefit. After implementation additional monitoring will be completed to determine if the re-construction/reconstruction actions were successful at minimizing impacts to the watershed or if additional work is required.

A cumulative watershed effects assessment was completed utilizing an Equivalent Roaded Area analysis and concluded there will be no cumulative watershed effects from implementing the Project, see the Watershed Resource Summary for additional information.

## 3.12 Wildlife

### Terrestrial Wildlife

Analysis presented in the BA and Terrestrial Species BE was to determine the effects of the alternatives for endangered, threatened or Forest Service sensitive species. There are four endangered species (Fresno kangaroo rat, Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep and California condor, Pacific fisher) on the Forest. However, only the Pacific fisher occurs in the Project area. The remaining endangered species do not occur in the Project area; therefore, they were not be analyzed further. There are ten Forest Service sensitive wildlife species that occur on the Sierra National Forest. Of the ten, seven wildlife species have been analyzed for the Project. Three species (bald eagle, wolverine and willow flycatcher) are not addressed because their habitat will not be disturbed by the actions of this Project.

The BA (Barnes, Sorini 2020) contains the complete analysis for the Pacific Fisher. The Pacific Fisher has approximately 200,000 acres of habitat in the entire Project area. There are approximately 12 miles (4800 acres) of habitat within the action area (1/4 mile on each side of the proposed routes, CUAs and roads) that overlap with denning habitat or suitable habitat. There are 1.3 miles (400 acres) that overlap with fisher den buffers. The potential for direct effects of collisions (hitting or injuring) from adding these proposed routes, CUAs, or roads to the Forest trail system from vehicle travel located within Pacific Fisher habitat is not expected to occur. Maintenance/restoration actions to bring routes, roads or CUAs to Forest Standards will follow Forest Standard and Guidelines, Best Management practices, and Project specific design criteria to minimize or eliminate the potential for direct or indirect effects. Proposed routes, roads, and CUAs are spread out across the Forest, therefore local impacts will be short term.

The BA has determined that the project *May Affect, but is Not Likely to Adversely Affect* the Pacific Fisher in the implementation of the Project. Rationale for the determination is detailed in the direct and indirect effects sections for the species of the BA.

Analysis for the BE determined that implementation of Alternative 2 or 3 may impact individuals but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability for the California spotted owl, Northern goshawk, great gray owl, Pallid bat, Fringed myotis, Townsend's big-eared

bat, and Pacific marten due to potential short term noise disturbance if vehicles are moving past an area where the species is resting, denning or nesting.

## **Migratory Birds**

Potential effects to migratory bird populations and their habitat from the Project have been assessed within the Project Management Indicator Species Report and Biological Assessment/Evaluation (complete report located in the Project record). Conservation of migratory birds and their habitats and mitigation measures were also included during development and design of the Project, including season of use.

There are no significant effects anticipated to any of the listed bird species or habitat from the proposed Project. Potential direct effects include short term disturbance or unintended/accidental loss of an individual nest or young during project implementation at various times and locations as work on various trails takes place over time, and as recreationists enjoy the trails throughout the designated season of use. Indirect effects include short term disturbance, habitat fragmentation within an individual's home range, and loss of cover or potential nesting sites, locally. These effects are not expected to be significant due to remaining habitat availability and implementation of the design features and conservation measures. Potential positive indirect effects include visitors potentially experiencing viewing and appreciating the avian wildlife they see and hear along the trail.

Negative impacts could include increased predator activity and exposure to nests along trails. Trails can help or hinder resource objectives within this Project area, since they may be used during firefighting or other emergency actions in the area, or they could be the starting point of fires. Increased recreation can be associated with increased camping, vegetation trampling, and food trash that can attract scavengers or animals that may prey on birds or nests, and weeds can spread along trails that degrade habitat locally. However, due to the large area of other suitable habitat across much of the forest, and low visitor recreational use of many of the trails, the impact is probably localized and minor. Areas with high use, especially around riparian areas and known FSS species nests or dens should be patrolled or monitored regularly during recreation season of use for trash, unauthorized trails, and weeds; to promptly curb and mitigate, as appropriate, any resource issues that maybe occurring in sensitive habitats.

In addition to following LRMP and Record of Decision (2010 Travel Management ROD) Standards & Guidelines, some of the seasons of use for Forest Service sensitive species will be a benefit to the migratory birds because some of the trails and areas are not accessible during nesting periods.

## 4.0 Finding of No Significant Impact

The responsible official will evaluate the effects of the Project relative to the definition of significance established by the CEQ Regulations (40 CFR 1508.13). The evaluation includes reviewing and considering the Draft EA and documentation included in the Project record, and determines whether the alternatives will, or will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. If it is determined that there is no significant impact, this EA proves to be an efficient analysis and an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. The rationale for the finding is determined by the following, organized by sub-section of the CEQ definition of significance cited above.

### 4.1 Context

For the alternatives, the context of the environmental effects is based on the environmental analysis in this EA. The local context of this action is limited to the proposed addition of 29 miles of routes and 11 acres of CUAs within the Project area on the HSRD and BLRD of the SNF. In relation to the 834, 651 Non-Wilderness acres on the SNF, the impacted area is on a relatively small scale. Project activities focus on the addition of routes, roads, and areas to the NFTS, which are presented in Section 1.0 of this Draft EA. When considering the context of the activities expected to take place within the Project area, there are no significant effects.

### 4.2 Intensity

Intensity is a measure of the severity, extent, or quantity of effects, and is based on information from the environmental impacts analysis of this EA and the references in the Project record. The effects of this Project have been appropriately and thoroughly considered with an analysis that is responsive to concerns and issues raised by the public. The agency has taken a hard look at the environmental effects using relevant scientific information and knowledge of site-specific conditions gained from field visits. My finding of no significant impact is based on the context of the Project and intensity of effects using the ten factors identified in 40 CFR 1508.27(b).

#### **1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.**

The finding of no significant environmental effects is not biased by the beneficial effects of the action. Project benefits include: providing a diversity of road and trail opportunities for experiencing a variety of environments and modes of travel; Forest management of OHV recreation, resulting in more sustainable trails; and mitigating impacts to cultural resource sites while providing for an enhanced recreation experience. No significant adverse direct or indirect effects to the environment were identified during the environmental impacts analysis (Section 3.0). Adverse effects on the resources presented in Section 3.0 are judged to not be significant due the small scale of the addition of proposed trails and the implementation of Project DC. Design criteria and BMPs will reduce, eliminate, and/or avoid adverse effects.

#### **2. The degree to which the proposed actions affect public health or safety.**

There will be no significant effects on public health and safety. Implementation of this Project will help to reduce user conflict and increase public safety. The Project involves routine work that has occurred and continues to occur near the Project area on NFS lands.

During OHV trail reconstruction, the safety of Forest visitors accessing dispersed recreation will be considered prior to work being done and mitigate any concerns via signage, public outreach, traffic cones, web media, or other means adequate for the situation.

**3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as the proximity to historical or cultural resources, parklands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.**

There are no park lands, prime farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas within the Project area. Unique characteristics of the Project area include historical or cultural resources and wet meadows. BMPs and DC will be implemented to provide protection to the cultural resources and wet meadows, and also to meet the requirements of the SNF S&Gs (2004). Routes with potential impact to sites of significance will not be brought forward into the NFTS.

**4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.**

The effects on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial. The activities included in the Project are routine transportation, botanical, recreation, and watershed management activities, and there is no known credible scientific controversy over the impacts of the Project. The controversial nature of this project cannot be eliminated, but it has been reduced based on comments received and the collaboration that occurred during the public involvement process and the IDT's review of resource concerns. There is no substantive scientific controversy related to the effects of the proposed actions on the human environment. Public involvement with interested and affected individuals, organizations, and agencies throughout the environmental analysis identified concerns regarding implementation of the proposed actions, particularly with regard to the routes in the 007 area. The Draft EA adequately addresses these concerns and the associated environmental effects.

**5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.**

The Forest Service has considerable experience with actions like those proposed in this Project. The analysis shows the effects are not uncertain, and do not involve unique or unknown risks. The possible effects of implementing Alternative 2 or 3 are neither highly uncertain nor will they present unique or unknown risks. The consequences of these actions are known, as described in the specialist reports (Project record and summarized in this EA).

**6. The degree to which the action may establish precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.**

Selection of Alternative 2 or 3 will not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects, because it conforms to all existing SNF LRMP direction and is applicable to the Project area. No significant effects are identified in the Draft EA, nor do these actions influence a decision in principle about any future considerations.

**7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.**

There are no known significant cumulative effects between this Project and other ongoing or planned projects in or adjacent to this Project because the resource specialists have examined the routes using the same management units used during the previous Travel Management analysis for the purpose of the cumulative effects analysis. The effects of other reasonably foreseeable future actions as well as past actions and ongoing actions were included in the specialists' analyses.

**8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.**

Any route that is found to have an adverse effect will not be brought forward into the NFTS. The action will have no significant adverse effect on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources because all cultural resources will be protected through DC and/or re-alignment. (DEA and Heritage Report for the Project [Classified] [Mogge, Krietsch, and Irwin 2020] located in the Project record.)

**9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.**

The FS has begun consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service concerning the Yosemite toad, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, and Pacific fisher. Through detailed analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on the three species and one critical habitat, it was determined that the project *May Affect, but is Not Likely to Adversely Affect* the Yosemite toad, Yosemite toad critical habitat, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, and the Pacific Fisher. Concurrence from the Service is expected prior to publishing the Final EA for this Project.

**10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.**

The selection of Alternative 2 or 3 will not violate Federal, State, and local laws or requirements for the protection of the environment. Applicable laws and regulations were considered in the Draft EA and are described below. The actions are consistent with the 1991 SNF LRMP and the 2004 and 2012 LRMP Amendments.

**Legal Requirements for Environmental Protection**

This Project will not constitute a significant effect on the human environment and is consistent with requirements of the following laws and regulations. Therefore, it does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

**Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations**

**Clean Air Act of 1970 (CAA):** The CAA provides for the protection and enhancement of the nation's air resources. No exceedance of the federal and state ambient air quality standards is expected to result from either of the alternatives (Section 3.1).

**Clean Water Act (CWA):** The Clean Water Act delegates authority for management of water quality to the states, and waives sovereign immunity for state and local laws pertaining to water quality protection. Compliance with the federal CWA is primarily through the California Porter Cologne Act as administered by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plans and implementation of Best Management Practices (Section 3.11 and Watershed Resource Report in the Project record). The Watershed Resource analysis concluded that each of the action alternatives complies with the CWA through prohibiting cross-country motor vehicle travel and implementation of the design criteria listed in Section 2.4.6 and in the Motorized TMA. The CWA also regulates the dredging and filling of freshwater and coastal wetlands. Section 404 (33 USC 1344) prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters (including wetlands) of the United States without first obtaining a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Wetlands are regulated in accordance with federal Non-Tidal Wetlands Regulations (Sections 401 and 404). No dredging or filling is part of this Project and no permits are required.

**Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973:** The ESA requires that any action authorized by a federal agency not be likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of habitat of such species that is determined to be critical. Section 7 of the ESA (16 USC 1531 et seq.), as amended, requires the responsible federal agency to consult the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service concerning endangered and threatened species under their jurisdiction. An Aquatic Species Biological Assessment and Biological Evaluation were developed for the Draft EA (Otto, Sorini-Wilson 2020). The BA for the Yosemite toad, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, and Pacific fisher was submitted to the Service in June 2020. This Project incorporates compliance with the Service with DC for all alternatives (Sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.7 and Biological Assessment for Fish and Wildlife [Barnes and Sorini-Wilson 2020]).

**Executive Order 12898 Environmental Justice:** Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (issued 25 February 11, 1994), requires that each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. None of the alternatives disproportionately affect minority and low-income populations (Section 3.8).

**Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Executive Order 13186:** This Project was evaluated against SNF LRMP Standards and Guidelines, and Project Design Criteria, to ensure consistency and to eliminate or reduce potential adverse effects to migratory birds. Under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), the Forest Service is directed to “provide for diversity of plant and animal communities based on the suitability and capability of the specific land area in order to meet overall multiple-use objectives.” (P.L. 94-588, Sec 6 (g) (3) (B)). The January 2000 USDA Forest Service (FS) Landbird Conservation Strategic Plan, followed by Executive Order 13186 in 2001, in addition to the Partners in Flight (PIF) specific habitat Conservation Plans for birds and the January 2004 PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan all reference goals and objectives for integrating bird conservation into Forest management and planning.

In late 2008, a Memorandum of Understanding between the USDA Forest Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to Promote the Conservation of Migratory Birds was signed. The intent of the MOU is to strengthen migratory bird conservation through enhanced collaboration and cooperation between the Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service

as well as other federal, state, tribal and local governments. Within the National Forests, conservation of migratory birds focuses on providing a diversity of habitat conditions at multiple spatial scales and ensuring that bird conservation is addressed when planning for land management activities.

The Project will not adversely impact migratory landbird species or their associated habitats. Potential impacts to migratory species would be minimized through the adherence of LRMP Standards and Guidelines for snags, riparian reserve buffers, limited ground disturbance, and maintenance of canopy closure. If repeated occupancy occurs or a nest site is located, new PACs would be established in accordance with the SNFPA 2004.

**National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976:** The NFMA amends the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 and sets forth the requirements for LRMPs for the NFS. This Project is consistent with the NFMA and the LRMP as amended.

**National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966:** Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the potential effects of a Project on historic, architectural, or archaeological resources that are eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and to afford the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment. Section 110 requires federal agencies to identify, evaluate, inventory, and protect National Register of Historic Places resources on properties they control. Potential impacts to archaeological and historic resources were evaluated in compliance with Section 106.

A cultural resource identification effort was conducted of the project area by professional archaeologists. The goal was to identify cultural resources at risk of adverse effects from motor vehicle use. No adverse effects to cultural resources are anticipated with the implementation of this Project due to the DC that will mitigate impacts. If impacts cannot be mitigated on a route, it will not be brought forward into the NFTS (see Section 3.4).

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969:** The analysis process documented in the EA comply with the National Environmental Policy Act. Direction in 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 and Forest Service Handbook (FSH 1909.15) was followed throughout development of this EA for this Project.

**Travel Management:** On November 9, 2005, the Forest Service published a new regulation entitled, Travel Management; Designated Routes and Areas for Motor Vehicle Use; Final Rule (Travel Management Rule), which modified motor vehicle use direction for NFS lands under 36 CFR Sections 212, 251, 261, and eliminated 36 CFR Section 295. The rule provides guidance to the Forest Service on designation and management of motor vehicle use on NFS lands, and requires formal designation of roads, trails, and areas open to motor vehicle use on each national forest and grassland (USDA FS 2005h). The Travel Management regulations require consideration of certain criteria when designating routes for motor vehicle use (36 CFR 212.55(a) through (e)). The SNF considered these criteria throughout all stages of this process beginning with the purpose and need (Section 1.2), the alternatives (Section 2.0), and the environmental impacts (Section 3.0).



## 5.0 References

- United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2017. Amendment of the Programmatic Biological Opinion on Nine Forest Programs on the Nine National Forests in the Sierra Nevada of California for the Endangered Sierra Nevada Yellow-legged Frog, Endangered Northern Distinct Population Segment of the Mountain Yellow-legged frog, and Threatened Yosemite toad. Biological Opinion: FF08ESMF00-2014-F-0557-1. 79 pp.
- United States Forest Service. 2018. Programmatic Agreement Among the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, California State Historic Preservation Officer, Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Processes for Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for Management of Historic Properties by the National Forests of the Pacific Southwest Region.
- United States Forest Service. 2012. National Best Management Practices for water quality management on National Forest System Lands. Volume 1: National Core BMP Bass Lake Ranger District, Sierra National Forest 293 Technical Guide. USDA FS, FS-990a. April 2012. 165p.
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- United States Forest Service. 2004. Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Record of Decision and Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region. Vallejo, CA (ROD). January, 2004. 492pp and 72 pp.
- United States Forest Service. 1991. Final Environmental Impact Statement. Sierra National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. USDA, Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, Sierra National Forest.